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The Most Important Thing That I Learned at Conservation Field Days;
The Production of Maple Syrup

On September 19 the Jordan Elbridge sixth grade class went on a field trip to the Cayuga County Conservation Field Days at Emerson Park. We visited seven different stations where we learned about cows, fish, migration, maple syrup, deer, and soil. The one topic that caught my attention the most was maple syrup. At our field trip we were given samples of maple syrup and maple candy. It was delicious!

New York is one of two states that has maple trees, Vermont being the other. Sap production begins in warm summer months when the process of photosynthesis creates carbohydrates that get stored in the tree as starch. A maple tree can produce 10 to 20 gallons of sap per tap. The sap of a maple tree is 98 percent water and 2 percent sugar. To get maple syrup you drill a hole into a maple tree and use a tube to transfer the sap into a container. You have to boil the maple syrup to evaporate the water so there is only sugar left which is what makes maple syrup very sticky. Maple syrup takes a long time to make, around 18 hours. There are four grades of maple syrup including golden, amber, dark, and very dark. As long as a maple tree stays healthy it can produce sap for years or even decades.

Many people enjoy not only maple syrup but other maple products including maple cotton candy, maple cream, maple candy, and maple butter. I like to put maple syrup on my pancakes and waffles. My family and I love maple cotton candy and look forward to getting it at the New York State Fair every summer.

Based on the facts I learned from my field trip it takes a lot of time, patience and effort to make maple syrup. Luckily we have maple